



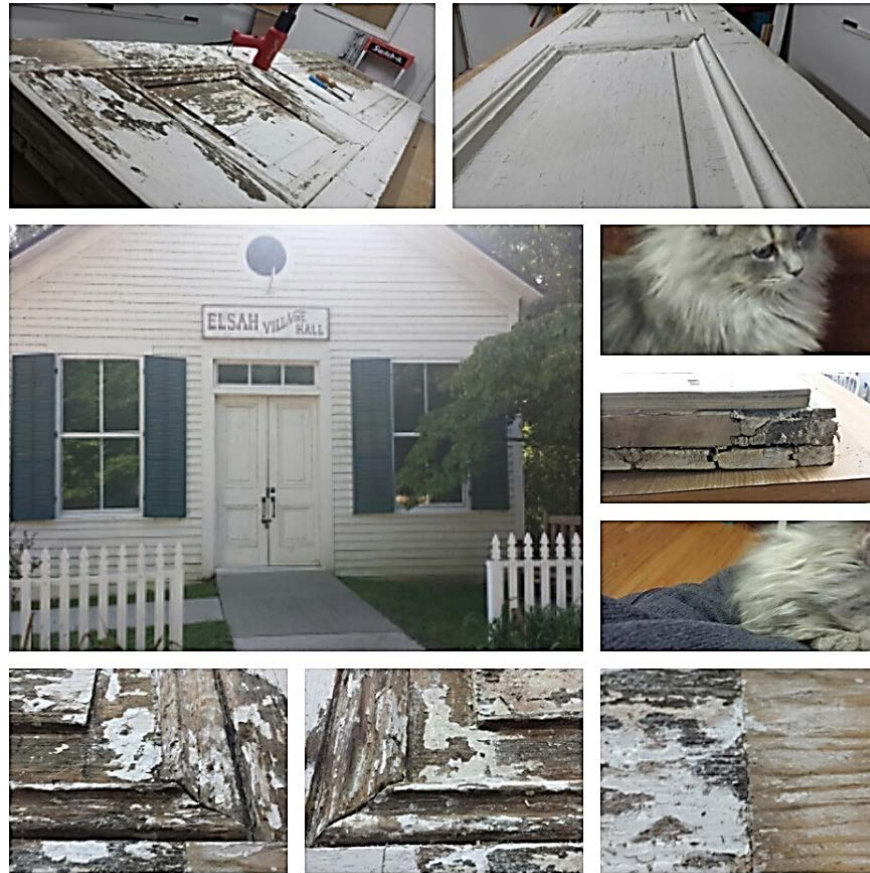
# ELSAH HISTORY

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## Restoring the Elsay Village Hall Doors



As a regular viewer of the Antiques Road Show, I like to guess what will be said about a featured object. The appraisers all value an object that is original and untouched whether the object is pottery, two-dimensional artwork, sculpture, furniture, or even a baseball. If it is sufficiently rare, minor imperfections do not make much difference in the value. Sometimes they even look for wear that tells the appraiser (if not always the owner or the audience) that this is authentic and has been used.

So it is with historic preservation of buildings. Original materials and entrances are very important to a building. In part, original materials tell us about the building, its builders and users over the years. The front door and entrance are especially valued because they invite you into the building. Like antiques, original materials add a monetary value to the house as well as adding value to our community.



And lastly, for those of us interested in sustainability and being green, keeping original materials is green. Repair uses fewer resources, reduces landfill use and pollution from burning. Old growth wood used in the original doors is more durable than modern farmed wood.

While many of us mourn the loss of Elsay doors and buildings over the years, there is still a treasure of original doors to enhance our historic buildings. Therefore, it is with special pleasure that this issue of *Elsah History* provides a detailed description of the restoration of the front exterior doors of the Village Hall by Amy Taylor and her husband, Tom Pope. This issue includes a detailed description of the work that brought back these doors to good functionality and beauty.

The Village of Elsay was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971. This federal program, implemented by the individual states, seeks to recognize and preserve unique and historic buildings and places. The program provides information and guidance on the appropriate historic preservation of buildings. Prior to the work on the doors, we consulted some of these publications on the internet. These included:

- United States Secretary of Interior National Preservation Standards (url: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>). and
- Preservation Briefs (url: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm>) on the best practices of preserving, rehabilitating, and restoring historic buildings. These publications help historic building owners recognize and resolve common problems.
- Also, useful are the methods and approaches described in the Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program (url: [www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm))

Secretary of Interior Standards Technical Preservation Services publication, ITS Number 4, also gives this guidance regarding doors:

Selecting appropriate replacement doors as part of a rehabilitation project is important in retaining the character of a historic building regardless of whether it is a residential or a commercial structure. The front door to a house, a store, or an office is an integral feature of the entrance to the building, and it should reflect accurately the building's style, period of architectural significance, and its use. If the historic door is still extant, it should be retained and repaired, or it must be replaced if too deteriorated to repair.

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/applying-rehabilitation/its-bulletins/ITS04-Doors-Replacement.pdf>.

During the Village Hall Door restorations, Amy Taylor provided regular reports and images on the work progress; and there was an easy conversation when a question arose on how best to proceed. These simple ideas were in our thoughts:

- Retain original material as much as possible,
- Use the least damaging techniques, and
- Use like materials when repair or replacement is needed.

The restored doors look beautiful and are now fully functional. We believe that the doors may be as old as the building which was built in 1887. We realize that the doors will need regular maintenance and attention to maintain their current appearance and functionality. Nevertheless, it is our hope that the work on the doors will give at least another 130 years of welcoming visitors to our Village Hall.

In this issue, the 2018 Annual Village of Elsay Museum Photography Exhibit announces the year's theme, "My Favorite Door." It is hard to pick a single favorite door because there are so many



wonderful ones. For the exhibit, photographers may submit up to three printed images. There will be a special recognition for images of historic doors. With the photographers' permission, we hope to share some of these historic door images in future issues of Elsay History or in other formats.

### **Restoring the Village Hall Doors Detail by Detail By Jane Pfeifer**

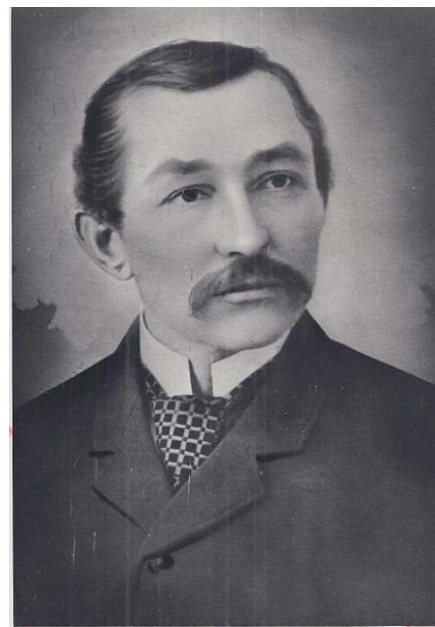


The Village of Elsay was incorporated as an Illinois municipality or government in 1873. After incorporation, various buildings were used for village government activities. In 1887, the Village purchased the Village Hall property from the Odd Fellows fraternal organization. The Village of Elsay also contracted to have the Village Hall building (at 26 LaSalle) constructed. The *Jersey County Democrat* newspaper stated that Victor Keyser began the building's stone foundation in the fall of 1887. Stephen H. Tyler and John Bernard Reintges (son of Peter Reintges) constructed the frame building on that foundation in late fall 1887. The bell and tower located on the top of the building was added later in 1890.

Amy Taylor is a descendant of John Bernard Reintges. Amy and her husband, Tom Pope, restored the Village Hall doors as a gift to the community. When I tell people about this gift and the power of family to draw people to a community, they are amazed.

I met Amy Taylor and Tom Pope by chance a number of years ago. They were in Elsay researching Amy's Reintges family. I finished my bike ride and was putting it away. Like most Elsay residents, I say hello to total strangers. I said hello to Amy and Tom. We immediately fell into conversation about my bike. Fellow cyclists seem to meet very easily, even when they are not riding their bikes! We chatted and I invited them into our house. I learned that Amy's father, William Bernard Taylor, was a descendant of Peter Reintges through Peter's son, John Bernard Reintges. We also shared our knowledge that long time local resident, June Cronin, had a connection with the Reintges family through her mother, Violet Rister.

A little later, in response to that discussion, Amy requested copies of some photographs of the Reintges family from the Historic Elsay Foundation photograph collection. Our work together on that project was happy and filled with the joy of discovery of family connections.



*John Bernard Reintges (1853-1919)  
Village of Elsay Museum collection  
Photograph donated by Pat Farmer*



In 2016, Amy visited the area again. This time Bruce A. Pates III was with her. Bruce is also a Reintges descendant and the grandson of Bruce A. Pates Sr. who was the owner of the Pates House on the western bluffs.

Bruce Pates III is the author of the article, "Elsah Memories of a Privileged Young Boy" in *Elsah History no. 94*. He is a dedicated and persistent researcher, and has been very helpful in writing this newsletter and researching various Sylvester topics.

We shared information and again looked at the Historic Elsah Foundation collection at the Village Hall building, 26 LaSalle. During this visit, Bruce, Amy and Tom were invited by Duncan Charters and Cecily Lee into the Peter Reintges House (33 LaSalle), and Deborah Smith showed them the Buggy Shop (22 Mill Street) which was built by John Bernard Reintges. At the end of the day, Bruce Pates donated to the Museum's "Restore Our Doors" project, and Amy and Tom offered to restore the Village Hall doors.

*Peter Reintges House ca 1853*



John Bernard Reintges (1853-1919) was the first European American born in Elsah. He was born, in a log cabin up the hill from the location of the above house.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Interview with Eva Reintges, 1967, by Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., Historic Elsah Foundation files, Elsah, IL

Peter and Eva Hutsch Reintges were John Reintges' parents. Peter Reintges died in 1863 and Eva married Christian Loehr, a widower, in 1864.

The Loehr House was being constructed about the same time as the marriage. After construction, the whole family moved into the Loehr house and the Peter Reintges House became Hotel Elsah.

*Loehr House.*



The Loehr House burned after WWI and was replaced by a bungalow. An early resident was Nettie Segraves. We know this property today as the Maple Leaf Cottage Inn.



John Bernard Reintges built and owned the Buggy Shop ca 1877 (left image). He was a wheelwright.

The Village of Elsah government owns the Village Hall. The Village Board maintains the building. The Museum Advisory Committee operates the Museum as a joint activity of HEF and the Village. Jane Pfeifer, secretary to the Museum Committee, was designated to develop a draft scope of the work and communicate with Amy to finalize it. Amy and Tom provided references from their previous work.



Les Sontag, as chair of the Village Board's buildings and grounds committee, was the Board's representative. Les was kind and quick to be helpful, and both he and the board were as diligent in verifying Amy's and Tom's credentials as they would have been with any other contractor working on Village property.

By October 24th, having received and reviewed glowing references of Amy's and Tom's work, the Board accepted their proposal and a contract was signed.

This following was the scope of work.

*The Village of Elsau shall*

*Notify the Zoning Board that this restoration project will be completed by April 1, 2017;*

*Remove the doors and install a temporary door after December 3, 2016;*

*Remove and retain the hardware for reinstallation;*

*Clean hardware and respray with satin black Rustoleum and repair and lubricate the lock and latches;*

*Deliver the doors to your shop or house and pick up the doors when completed;*

*Re-install hardware;*

*Re-install the doors; and*

*The Village shall use the "Restore Our Doors" funds and Village government general funds for a contract/restoration carpenter to install both the temporary doors and the restored original doors.*

*Taylor/Pope Scope of work:*

*Retain on the doors the two modern exterior drip moldings;*

*Remove the paint on the doors without dipping;*

*Sand the surface smooth for painting;*

*Adjust the moldings on the panels so that they are smooth and in direct contact with the door panels so that water does not leak into the door panels (use modern materials only when original materials cannot be used);*

*Repair cracks as appropriate;*

*Hand paint or spray doors with primer and exterior paint;*

*Bare wood will be primed using exterior Sherman Williams Paint (equivalent or higher) primer. The primer will be allowed to dry. One coat of exterior Sherman Williams Paint*

*Resilience (equivalent or higher) will be applied with a brush, two coats if sprayed. Paint must be allowed to dry between coats.*

We agreed to wait until after the Historic Elsau Foundation annual Home for the Holidays event to remove the doors. On a cold Monday, December 12, 2016, Richard Mosby, a skilled local carpenter, removed the old doors and installed a temporary door. Mayor Cy Bunting and Randy Greding, maintenance worker, removed the hardware and moved the doors into Jane Pfeifer's van. On Tuesday, December 13, Jane drove the doors up to Glenview, Illinois. It was quite snowy in the Chicago area, but Amy and her two sons unloaded the doors into the workshop with enthusiasm.



*Door prior to stripping*

By that Saturday, December 16, 2016, Amy had already stripped one door and reported on various door details. She said:

*I have one side of one door done. The wood is surprisingly crisp with detail, with the paint striped off. Some damage but we'll assess that more after sanding. It looks like we won't have to have new molding milled! The old is salvageable.*

Amy and Jane had an email discussion concerning whether some rot on the bottom of the door should be replaced with composition, wood or other fill. By the end of the month, Amy and Tom had researched and decided to fix the bottom with a strip of treated wood, to be attached with wood pegs. And, as stated in the scope of work, they would reattach the drip moldings with brads just it had been attached previously. Amy said that

*Everything will be primed and painted and sealed so that the doors will last a long, long time again.*

This approach to the bottom of the door allowed the door and the repairs to expand and contract at the same rate, avoiding separations.

*Door corner stripped**Door stripped*

Our next email discussions included the type of nails to use. The original nails were mainly hand-made but some were factory made. In removing the moldings, the nails were so rusted that the moldings were not evenly touching the panels. In some cases, the nails were just rusty powder. We discussed stainless steel nails and other nails. In the end, Amy decided to purchase square head nails like those installed in the past.



*Nails removed from doors.**Comparison of new and old nails*

Amy reported on December 26, 2016:

*The pictures attached show the beautiful wood underneath. We're not so sure it's not oak. It might be pine but it's a beautiful reddish color like a red oak, and it does seem a little less soft than pine. The wood is in very reasonable condition for the age of the door, we're pretty impressed! Also, all the gaps and cracks have been cleaned out, and you can see in the last photo the wooden pegs that hold the old tongue joints in the grooves. The doors are truly a work of old-world art! It's been a pleasure working on them.*

The door rails, stiles and panels are red oak and the moldings are poplar. The reason for these particular two woods is not known, but availability probably played a part in the choice. Red oak is a native plant to the Midwest. Poplar is readily available and is easy to cut.

*Door joints cleaned**Joint cleaned**Peg hole to be repaired*

By December 27, 2017, Amy and Tom were working on the panels that backed the doors. They used bottle brushes and a vacuum to both clean out and blow out the space between the two doors. A few Asian beetles lost their winter home. They used dowel/peg and glue to affix the bead board back onto the doors. Amy reported in an email:

*The nails deteriorated, not much holding it on any more! We'll leave the top unsealed so the door can breathe.*



*Back separation and bottom rail condition*

The next step was to apply a sealer. There were two reasons for use of the sealer: to separate the original wood from the modern paint and also to seal the doors from moisture. Wood develops cracks when moisture gets into the wood and the moisture compresses the wood fibers. Then, when the wood dries out, the compressed fibers separate and cracks appear.

*Amy with mask applying epoxy*

On December 31, 2016 Amy reported:

*After all the dowels are sanded down and repairs made, we're going to seal the wood*

*with Smith's penetrating epoxy, which is specifically made for projects like this. It's highly flexible and will stabilize and seal the wood. We'll then repair the cracks with a different epoxy and re-sand. Then comes priming, caulking and painting!*

*Door with epoxy*

The kind of paint was specified in the scope of work. However, as with every other detail, Amy and Jane had an email discussion, especially in terms of priming the wood. In the end it was decided to use acrylic paint.

By February 26, 2017, the doors were finished. Jane and David Pfeifer picked up the doors on Tuesday, March 14, 2017. It was another snowy day in Glenview, but all went well and was a joyous day. And we have a happy image of Amy and Tom taken that day. All four of us were so thrilled to have been part of this project.

*Cat appeared at Amy's shop when working on the doors; Amy named the cat Elsay*



*Amy Taylor and Tom Pope*

On Thursday, March 15, 2017, Richard Mosby reinstalled the doors. It took a lot of care and precision, and was not an easy job. The current owner of the John Reintges' Buggy Shop, Deborah Smith, had contributed hand-wrought nails that she salvaged when the siding was replaced on the Buggy Shop. Two of these salvaged, original, hand-wrought nails were installed on the doors, one on the back of the north door and one on south door on the door stop.

*Richard Mosby installing doors*



*Doors as initially installed without exterior astragal*



Of course, this is not the end of the story. We are custodians of buildings from the past, and we will always have maintenance to do. Yet how many communities can report that a descendent of a builder would be repairing a critical feature of a building 130 years after its construction? I don't think there are many people like Amy Taylor and Tom Pope. Both are highly skilled and very generous. We are indeed fortunate to know Amy and Tom who in generously sharing their connection with the past have given us a gift from a Reintges family descendant. **Thank you Amy and Tom from all of us.**

*Deborah Smith and Richard Mosby picking out the best of the salvaged nails from the Buggy Shop*



After having some tightly sealed temporary doors, it was apparent that the original ones did not seal as tightly as we have come to expect with modern doors. While there is a lip (astragal) on the back side of the doors to seal them, an additional astragal was installed on the outside. In the past, during driving rains, water would go in between the doors onto the threshold and the floor. The additional piece will keep that from happening.

## Historic Elsay Foundation Thanks Its 2016-17 Underwriters

- Jersey State Bank, Jerseyville, IL
- William R. Haine, Illinois State Senator, 56<sup>th</sup> District
- Dan Beiser, Illinois State Representative, 111<sup>th</sup> District
- Principia College, Elsay, IL
- Liberty Bank, Godfrey, IL
- H. Adams Development Company, Alton, IL
- Federal Steel, East Alton, IL
- Grafton Technology, Jerseyville, IL
- Quality Motors, Jerseyville, IL

And its many members, contributors, volunteers, and friends.



## Historic Elsah Foundation Tributes and News

PAULA R. BRADLEY, PRINCIPIA  
COLLEGE PROFESSOR OF FRENCH  
1930 – 2017

By Candace Jagel and Devon McNamara



Paula Richter Bradley passed away peacefully at her home in Elsah, Illinois, May 29, 2017, Memorial Day, and was honored in a private gathering in Elsah, June 17<sup>th</sup>. Professor Bradley was the only child of Eve Lee Richter (Hannike) and Ray A. Richter of Cincinnati, Ohio and the beloved wife of Edward Bradley of Jamestown, New York (Principia College Professor of French, U.S. Navy, Ret'd., D-Day Veteran, deceased 2009).

A graduate of Principia College (1952) with an M.A. in French from Middlebury College, Vermont (1955), Paula Bradley was Professor of French at Principia, recognized with the Edith and Lewis White Distinguished Professor endowed chair until her retirement in 1994. Her career was distinguished by the development with her husband, Ned, of academic and cultural study programs in France; the creation of a variety of courses and lecture programs on French language, literature, and politics; her service as chair of the Principia Faculty Senate and head of the Principia Modern Language Department; and her appointment to an endowed chair.

A rigorous teacher, Paula Bradley is most remembered by friends and colleagues for her professional guidance and personal support of generations of Principians, many of whom went on to careers in international spheres, education, history, and the arts. She delighted in staying in touch with her students.

The Bradley home, the former Elsah Village Inn, was restored by the couple in the 1970s and reflected their love of art, literature, international travel, and a long line of cherished cats. The home has been a highlight of Elsah Village House Tours and exemplifies preservation standards of the National Register of Historic Places.

Paula Bradley's years of community involvement included service on the Elsah Village board, president and board member of Historic Elsah Foundation, staff of the Maybeck Gallery (now the Christian Science Reading Room on La Salle Street), member of the Alton Little Theatre, and devoted supporter of the St. Louis Symphony. Among her many talents, Paula Bradley was a gourmet cook and her home hosted international and local guests for six decades.

Contributions in Paula Bradley's memory may be sent to Historic Elsah Foundation, P. O. Box 117, Elsah, Illinois 62028.





**EUGENIA K. DELANO KELLER****A Tribute**

By Dory and Blair Smith



Genie Keller (Eugenia K. Delano Keller) passed away peacefully on Sunday, August 13th, 2017 at United Methodist Village in Godfrey. She was 98. Genie lived in Elsah from the time she married Edward (Eddie) W. Keller on August 4th, 1961, until their move to Godfrey in 1995. Genie had a connection to Elsah's early days through her husband, Eddie Keller. The Keller family arrived in Elsah in the 1880's. Eddie Keller was born in Elsah, lived in the village most of his life, and served for a number of years as Elsah's mayor. Eddie passed on at their home in Godfrey on May 9th, 2011.

Genie was born in Jerseyville, Illinois, on March 3rd, 1919. As a young adult, she worked for 25 years at her father's business in Alton, Delano Insurance Agency. She was a member of the First Presbyterian Church in Alton for over 70 years. She volunteered at Alton Memorial Hospital, St. Anthony's Hospital, Meals on Wheels, and The Alton Museum of History and Art. She and Eddie were especially interested in the Hayner Library Friends and Hayner Library Homebound Program, and established the Edward and Genie Keller Scholarship Fund at Hayner Library.

One of Genie's creative loves was writing poetry and prose about the things dearest to her heart, and Elsah was usually near the top of her list. A few of her unpublished works include, "An

Armchair History of Elsah," prose pieces titled "An Ode to Santa Claus," "Little Grandma," "The First's in Elsah," and poems titled, "My River," "Who is Miss Elsah?" "Christmas Eve," and "The Flood of '93."

After Genie and Eddie moved to Godfrey, they maintained their connection to Elsah, at first by taking Sunday afternoon drives through the village, and later when friends visited Genie at United Methodist Village in Godfrey. Every discussion with Genie somehow meandered toward Elsah, and each visit seemed to leave her friends feeling a little better, because Genie routinely expressed gratitude and appreciation for everything life had given her. We will remember Genie for her wisdom, humor, graciousness, humility, and kindness.

Memorials may be made to the Jay Reed Delano Jr. Scholarship Program, c/o First Presbyterian Church, or to Hayner Library Friends. Online guestbook: [www.gentfuneralhome.com](http://www.gentfuneralhome.com)

**MY RIVER**

*There is a river  
That flows by my door  
It's wide and it's long  
And proud of its lore.*

*It's deep and it's shallow  
It's cool and it's warm  
It's lazy and rapid  
And can do great harm.*

*In beauty....it's amazing  
With sunsets - filled hearts  
The quiet wonder of evenings  
The call of shadowed Larks  
It made of itself the pathway  
Where man could easily trod  
To bring forth great beginnings  
In a nation led by God.  
Help keep me forever, My River  
On your banks where I lay my head  
You may fill me with happiness always  
But flow by my doorway, instead.*

*Genie Delano Keller. May, 2007*



## A Tribute – Lester Sontag



Les Sontag served on the Elsay Village Board in the late 1980s and again more recently when he and his wife, Patti, moved back to Elsay in 2013. He served as chair of the buildings and grounds committee. Historic Elsay Foundation is especially grateful for his willing and important help with the Restore Our Doors Project. He will be missed for both his work and his enthusiasm for Elsay.

The following is the published obituary.  
 ELSAH — Les Sontag, 79, passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday, February 15, 2017 while on a walk near his home in Elsay, Illinois. Les was born on July 9, 1937, in Troy, Missouri, the son of the late Gilbert and Thelma (Mewes) Sontag. He married Patti Jack Remington on August 12, 1971, in Alton, Illinois. She survives.

He graduated from Eden Seminary and pastored for several years before joining Citigroup until he retired in 1993. Les and Patti grew blueberries on their farm, Blueberry Ridge. He volunteered as an EMT in Calhoun and actively volunteered in Calhoun County Government. He enjoyed Sacred Harp singing, building and solving wooden puzzles, and traveling, having been to New Zealand, Europe, and most recently, Alaska. Most of all Les enjoyed being a grandpa and spending time with his family. He was in remission from the rare disease Amyloidosis for 12 years. He was treated at the Mayo Clinic in 2005. He and his wife Patti volunteered as teachers for Stanford University's "Living with Chronic Illness."

In addition to his wife, Patti, he is survived by seven children and their spouses: Tim (Lynn) Sontag of Ohio, Casey Reinking of California, Dan (Debbie) Bernier-Sontag of Vermont, Chris (Cheryl) Reinking of California, Becky (John) Wood of Minnesota, Carl Reinking of New Mexico, and Ruth (Mitch) Waks of Missouri; twelve grandchildren and their spouses Andy (Christina), Nicky, Jade (Chris), Adam, Kayla, Miranda, Annie, Donnie, Arielle, Dylan, Remington, and Rhys; two great-grandchildren, Tyler and Alex.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his granddaughter, Amber Bernier-Sontag, and his brother, Allen Sontag.

Memorials may be made to Amyloidosis Support Group, which he credited for saving his life by sending him to the Mayo Clinic.

## Village of Elsay Purchases Mott Building



The Village of Elsay government has purchased the Mott Building from Larry Hammer with the goal of preparing it for a commercial use by either a renter or purchaser. (See the press release at url: <http://www.thetelegraph.com/news/105004/village-of-elsah-seeks-entrepreneur-for-newly-acquired-elsah-landing-building>.)

A new coat of paint looks lovely on the building and additional work is anticipated.



## Frederick Oakes Sylvester Documentary



*Oil on Board, Bluff Scene by Frederick Oakes Sylvester, Village of Elsah Museum collection  
Donated by Helen Sprague, 2003*

Frederick Oakes Sylvester (1869-1915) was a well-known local St. Louis artist, teacher and poet. He taught in St. Louis Missouri at Central High School, a premier educational high school of the period. He was active in the local art scene as president of the St. Louis Artists' Guild and vice-president of the Society of Western Artists. He was and is widely collected and respected. He produced two large murals for the Noonday Club, a club of St. Louis business and political leaders.

In 1902, Sylvester purchased a cottage in Elsah, one of the cottages remaining from a closed resort, Piasa Bluffs Resort and Hotel. The site was used by his family and friends. He would draw inspiration and paint some of his most remembered river scenes from the Elsah area.

In 2014, a number of collectors and scholars joined together to gather financial and informational materials for a professional documentary about the life and work of Frederick Oakes Sylvester. They include, in alphabetical order:

- Colette Collester, professor emeritus, Principia College Art History Department, author of *Frederick Oakes Sylvester, The Principia Collection*
- John C. Guenther, LLC, architect and professor at Washington University

- Kris Impastato, St. Louis Library
- Robert Morrissey, collector and owner, Clark Graves Antiques
- Julie Dunn Morton, Mercantile Library
- Jane Pfeifer, retired Principia Archivist and board member of Historic Elsah Foundation

Like many educational documentaries, the financing of production requires grants and donations. Such projects require a long term commitment to gather resources. Knowing of his professional experience, knowledge, and ability to work in the long term, members of the group approached Paul Bockhorst

(<http://www.bockhorstproductions.com/>), who has produced a number of documentaries related to art, culture, and architecture. Four of his documentaries make him uniquely suited to producing another documentary about our local arts and crafts movement artist, Frederick Oakes Sylvester. They include:

- *Greene & Greene: The Art of Architecture*,
- *Pursuing Beauty: The Architecture of Bernard Maybeck*,
- *Designing with Nature: Arts & Crafts Architecture in Northern California*, and
- *Beautiful Simplicity: Arts & Crafts Architecture in Southern California*.

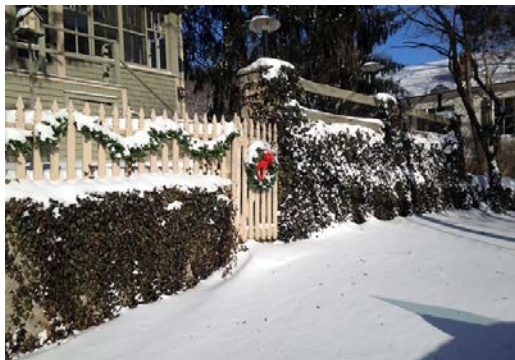
While this project started in 2014, it did not get very far on fund raising. Early in 2017, John Guenther called Historic Elsah Foundation and asked if it would be willing to be the not-for-profit organization (501-C-3) for this project. This role is important to allow tax-exempt donations. In March, HEF sent a general letter of support for the project, citing our previous publication about Sylvester by Paul O. Williams. At our September 2017 meeting, we signed an Agreement to be the recipient of funds and monitor their use. This Agreement states that HEF will not be involved in fund raising. The Committee formed earlier will do that work. Tim Tomlinson is the HEF liaison. Our only expense at this time is the cost of our attorney's review of the agreement, which was paid for by a donation from an HEF member.



While we are not the fund raising organization, we urge your support for this project. Like our previous publication, Frederick Oakes Sylvester: The Artist's Encounter with Elsah by Paul O. Williams, Frederick Oakes Sylvester's contributions and inspiration from his Elsah residence are an important part of Elsah's local history and culture. For additional information contact us through our email at [historicelsah@gmail.com](mailto:historicelsah@gmail.com).

### **Elsah's Home for the Holiday House Tour**

House tours have taken place in Elsah for many years, but not *every* year, and not always in December. Some of Elsah's early house tours coincided with the Fall colors or the Spring blooms, and some marked the beginning of the holiday season. Only recently - the last 13 years - has *Elsah's Home for the Holidays House Tour* become an annual event, held now each year on the first Saturday in December. This year's house tour is on Saturday, December 2nd, from Noon to 4:00 pm.



Imagine this scene: a picturesque, historic village, nestled between the bluffs along the Mississippi River; an invigorating December afternoon; houses, churches, and businesses all decorated for the season; a horse-drawn carriage ambling its way along the street; and gracious homeowners opening their beautiful homes to guests coming for a peek into history. That's the scene every year for *Elsah's Home for the Holidays House Tour*. This year visitors will have an opportunity to see 20 historic structures in Elsah, including 11 private homes and 9 other

public buildings and businesses. Tour guests may purchase a ticket (\$15 in advance or \$18 on the day of the house tour), and receive a booklet with a photo and a brief history of each home and building on the tour. Tickets may be purchased online at [www.historicelsah.org](http://www.historicelsah.org), or in person at Elsah General Store, Green Tree Inn, and Maple Leaf Cottage Inn, and Alton Convention and Visitors Bureau.

### **Village of Elsah Museum 2018 Photography Exhibit**

The Village of Elsah Museum announces the 2018 Annual Photography Exhibit to be held on Saturday, April 7 to Sunday, August 5, 2018. Submissions are due by Monday, March 19, 2018.

The theme for this exhibit is "My Favorite Door." The purpose of the exhibit is to celebrate and foster an appreciation of the beauty and unique qualities of Elsah and the immediate area in every season. Doors are an important part of a building or entry to a space. The first place winners will be recognized for an evocative image of all or part of a door (historic or non-historic) or a door-like image.

There are two first-place purchase prizes offered based on location. The Village of Elsah will contribute the purchase prize for a photograph taken in the valley area. Greatriverroad.com will donate the second purchase prize for a photograph taken in the surrounding area including Principia College, Chautauqua and the bluff and river areas.

Additionally, Green Tree Inn will donate a one night stay for two to the winner of the Village of Elsah Valley purchase prize. This year there will also be special recognition for historic doors images. A list of exterior wood and historic doors in the valley is listed at [escapetoelsah.com](http://escapetoelsah.com) and [historicelsah.org](http://historicelsah.org).

Erica Popp will be the outside judge who will choose the winners. She is a practicing artist and has her own gallery. Previously, she has taught



photography at St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley.

Works submitted for the purchase prize will be judged on the following criteria:

- expression of the purpose of the exhibit to foster an appreciation of Elsah and be recognizable as Elsah or the immediate area,
- expression of the theme, in a broad interpretation of “My Favorite Door,”
- quality of the photographic composition, and
- quality of the reproduction including any use of photographic tools.

For more information, check [escapetoelsah.com](http://escapetoelsah.com) for full details on the rules for submissions.

### **Village of Elsah Museum 2017 Photography Exhibit Winners**

The following photographers are represented in the exhibit: Joan Baker, Forrest Bemis, Cateline Gaston, Kim Howland, Matt Kelly, Karen King, Inge Mack, Marietta Massalone, Marty McKay, Yvonne Mossman, PhotogBuddies Kim Howland, PhotogBuddies Leslie Thompson, Christine Samoore, Karen Varga, Jeff Vaughn, Suzy Vogel, and Ray Watsek,

Village of Elsah purchase prize was awarded to Ray Watsek, of Elsah, Illinois for his work titled, “Stars of Elsah.”

*Stars of Elsah*



The Greatriverroad.com purchase prize was awarded to Marietta Massalone of Alton, Illinois.

The title of her work is “Mississippi Mist Meets Elsah Bluff.”

*Mississippi Mist Meets Elsah Bluff*



There were two special recognition awards: Marty McKay for “Reflections of Fall” and Joan Vogel Baker for “Autumn in Elsah.”

Thanks go to all who make this exhibit possible with their funding and time: The Village of Elsah, Historic Elsah Foundation, Greatriverroad.com, Green Tree Inn, Burton Art Services, and the Village of Elsah Museum Advisory Committee.

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